

and, according to Mr. Cotzé, never descends to the sea. Eggs from him are of the usual pale blue-green, covered with chalky matter; axis 1" 7"', diam. 1" 2"', similarly shaped at both ends.

A sealing-vessel, just returned from the Crozette Islands, brings up thirty-seven tuns of oil made from the skins of the Maccaroni Penguin (*Aptenodytes chrysocome*). I am told it takes the skins of 1400 birds to make one tun of oil; at this rate 51,800 birds have been destroyed for this one cargo! A man can catch, kill, and strip the skins from 350 or 360 birds in a day. How long will the race of Penguins last? How long before they are numbered, with the Great Auk, among the things that were?

Another vessel from the islands about Tristan d'Acunha has brought many live examples of the curious *Gallinula nesiotis*, or Island-hen, four of which are now running merrily about in my aviary, also three of the Island-Thrushes and their eggs, and a Finch (*Hyphantornis*?), and a lot of eggs of sea-fowl; but of these I must make a further examination and report.

South-African Museum, June 18, 1869.

XXXIII.—*Remarks on some species of Birds from New Zealand.*

By Dr. O. FINSCH, C.M.Z.S. &c.

IN a large collection of birds which I lately received from Dr. Julius Haast, the well-known explorer of New Zealand, I was very much pleased to find some of the species lately described as new by Mr. Walter Buller, in his 'Essay on the Ornithology of New Zealand'*, or in his paper in 'The Ibis' for the present year (*anteà*, pp. 37-43). A careful examination showed me at once that some of those so-called new species are by no means new to science; therefore it will, perhaps, be a matter of some interest to the readers of this Journal, as well as to ornithologists in general, to become acquainted with the results of my studies.

PLATYCERCUS ALPINUS, Buller, Ibis, 1869, p. 39.

Two specimens, male and female, from the Southern Alps,

* Translated by me in the 'Journal für Ornithologie' for 1867, pp. 305-347.

and marked as types of Mr. Buller's supposed species, are not distinguishable from the old known *P. auriceps*, Kuhl, either in size or colouring. Mr. Buller characterizes the new species by the orange frontal band, and by the orpiment-orange (instead of crimson) thigh-spots; but these slight differences are by no means specific, and only indicate the young bird. In my Monograph of the family *Psittacidae* (vol. ii. p. 286) I described such a younger bird, from a specimen in the Bremen Museum, which corresponds in every respect with *P. alpinus*, Bull.

NESTOR MERIDIONALIS (Gmel.).

Two specimens from the west coast of the South Island, the same locality from which Mr. Buller described his new *N. occidentalis* (*suprà*, pp. 40, 41), and most probably belonging to this species, I cannot distinguish from the true *N. meridionalis*. There are slight differences in the shade of their colouring, as well as in their size; but it must be remembered that all the species of *Nestor* vary very much, as I have already remarked in my Monograph, wherein will be found a full account of this subject. In any case *N. occidentalis* needs a more minute description of its distinctive characters before it can be enumerated in the list of good species.

I take this opportunity of adding an interesting notice respecting the systematic place of the genus *Nestor*, which Dr. Haast was kind enough to send me. He writes to me, "Your arrangement of the genus *Nestor* in the system is quite right. These birds are indeed honey-eaters; their tongues are armed on the point with papillæ as in the *Trichoglossinæ*." It is of great value to receive a positive statement as to the structure of the tongue in *Nestor*, the subject having hitherto been doubtful. Mr. Gould (Handb. B. Austral. ii. p. 551) declared that the tongue was not "furnished with a brush-like termination," whereas the correct figure of *N. norfolcensis*, given by Herr A. von Pelzeln (Sitzungsb. k.-k. Akad. Wissensch. Wien, xli. 1860, p. 322, cum tab. capit.), shows the papillæ very distinctly. This new fact given by Dr. Haast sets all doubt at rest, and the position of the genus *Nestor* among the *Trichoglossinæ* now becomes evident.

GERYGONE ASSIMILIS, Buller, Essay, p. 9.

Mr. Buller separated this new species from *G. flaviventris* more on account of the difference in the construction of their nests than from any shown by the birds themselves. I therefore expressed my doubts (Journ. f. Orn. 1867, p. 342) whether it was possible to distinguish the bird clearly. A specimen of *G. assimilis*, from Dr. Haast, convinced me at once that the skin of this species is not distinguishable from that of the true *G. flaviventris*. The specimen agrees in every respect with the description and figure given by Mr. Gray (Voy. 'Erebus' and 'Terror,' Birds, p. 5, pl. iv. fig. 1), except that the yellow tinge on the belly is paler; but the specimen is marked as a female.

TURNAGRA HECTORI, Buller, Ibis, 1869, p. 39.

The editor of 'The Ibis' has already suggested that this species is probably identical with *Otagon tanagra*, Schlegel (Nederl. Tijdschr. voor de Dierk. iii. 1865, p. 190). I agree with this supposition; for a careful comparison of the descriptions cannot admit of the slightest doubt as to their referring to the same species.

ANAS GRACILIS, Buller, Ibis, 1869, p. 41.

This is undoubtedly identical with *Anas* (*Querquedula*) *gibberifrons*, Salomon Müller (Verhandelingen Land en Volkenkunde, 1839-41, p. 159), as the comparison of a typical specimen of *A. gracilis* received from Dr. Haast with specimens from Timor in the Bremen Museum shows. The species has a wide geographical distribution. Timor (Sal. Müller, Wallace), Flores (Wallace), Celebes (Forsten), Northern Australia (Leyden Mus.), South Australia (Leyden Mus., Haast), New Caledonia (Leyden Mus.).

PODICEPS HECTORI, Buller, Essay, p. 19; Finsch, Journ. f. Orn. 1867, p. 345.

The distinctive character of this species, from our *P. cristatus* (Linn.), was declared by Mr. Buller to be the absence of white on the wings and shoulders. The collection contains a Grebe which Dr. Haast mentions in his letter as a typical *P. hectori*. This specimen is partially moulting, as is especially shown by the fact

that all the remiges are not fully grown, but are almost hidden by the tectrices. By unfolding the wings carefully one can see the white distributed in the same style as in our *P. cristatus*, with which the specimen agrees in every respect. I therefore cannot regard *P. hectori* as distinct from our *P. cristatus* (*P. australis*, Gould).

LARUS (BRUCHIGAVIA) MELANORHYNCHA, Buller, Ibis, 1869, p. 43.

If this species is not identical with the badly described *Larus andersoni*, Bruch (Journ. f. Orn. 1853, p. 102), from New Zealand, which Professor Blasius (*op. cit.* 1865, p. 384), declared to be nothing else than *L. scopulinus*, it certainly will be a good species. I, at least, cannot refer the fine specimen, received from Dr. Haast under the name last mentioned, to any of the known species, and take it for a good species, distinguishable by the slender black bill, tinged with reddish at the basal portion, and by the great extent of white on the remiges.

XXXIV.—On two more Collections of Birds from the Fantee Country. By R. B. SHARPE.

(Plate XI.)

SINCE the publication of my previous paper on the birds of the Fantee country (*suprà*, pp. 186–195) I have been favoured with an inspection of two small collections from the same locality. One of these was submitted to me by Mr. Higgins; and the other was sent to me by Mr. Whitely, of Woolwich. I am informed by the latter that the collection forwarded by him was formed in the interior of the Fantee country, on the borders of Ashantee and Dahomey, while the series sent to me by Mr. Higgins was collected, as before, in the immediate neighbourhood of Cape-Coast Castle.

The present paper will be found to contain the names of many rare and interesting species; and it is to be hoped that the collectors on whose labours it is based will be induced to continue their researches, and that ultimately we may become